

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for providing customer support to an electrical device user,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 establishing a communications link between a customer support representative
4 and the user with a customer support unit associated with the electrical device; and
5 transmitting communications of the customer support representative to the
6 user while the user is at the electrical device via the customer support unit.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting
2 communications of the customer support representative comprises the step of
3 transmitting audio and video data of the customer support representative to the
4 customer support unit.

1 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of transmitting
2 communications of the user to the customer support representative via the customer
3 support unit while the user is at the electrical device.

1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of transmitting
2 communications of the user comprises the step of transmitting audio and video data of
3 the user to the customer support representative.

1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of presenting the
2 customer support representative with information about the status and settings of the
3 electrical device.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of permitting the
2 customer support representative to change settings of the electrical device.

1 7. A system for providing customer support to an electrical device user,
2 comprising:
3 means for transmitting customer support representative communications
4 across a network; and
5 means for presenting the customer support representative communications to a
6 user at the electrical device.

1 8. The system of claim 7, wherein the means for transmitting customer
2 support representative communications comprises a microphone and video camera
3 that are adapted to receive audio and video data of the customer support representative
4 and wherein the means for presenting the customer support representative
5 communications to the user comprises a speaker and a display that provide the user
6 with audio and video data of the customer support representative.

1 9. The system of claim 8, wherein the means for transmitting customer
2 support representative communications further comprises network interface devices.

1 10. The system of claim 7, further comprising means for transmitting user
2 communications to the customer support representative.

1 11. The system of claim 10, wherein the means for transmitting user
2 communications to the customer support representative comprises a microphone and
3 video camera that are adapted to receive audio and video of the user.

1 12. The system of claim 7, further comprising means for presenting
2 information regarding electrical device status and settings to the customer support
3 representative.

1 13. The system of claim 12, wherein the means for presenting information
2 regarding electrical device status and settings comprises a web server module.

1 14. The system of claim 7, further comprising means for allowing the
2 customer support representative to change settings of the electrical device.

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1 15. A system for providing customer support to a user of an electrical
 2 device, comprising:
 3 a customer support unit that is adapted to electrically connect to the electrical
 4 device, the customer support unit comprising a speaker and a display that are adapted
 5 to present audio and video data of a customer support representative to the user; and
 6 network interface devices that are adapted to transmit and receive
 7 communications across a network.

1 16. The system of claim 15, wherein the customer support unit further
 2 comprises a microphone and video camera that are adapted to capture audio and video
 3 data of the user.

1 17. The system of claim 15, wherein the network interface devices include
 2 a modem adapted for transmitting and receiving communications across the Internet.

1 18. The system of claim 15, further comprising a web server module
 2 adapted to generate web pages containing information about the status and settings of
 3 the electrical device.

1 19. The system of claim 15, further comprising a communications module
 2 that is adapted to facilitate communications between the system and a customer
 3 support representative.

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- 1 20. A printer adapted for electrical connection with a peripheral device,
2 comprising:
3 a speaker configured to present audio data of a customer support representative
4 to a user;
5 a display configured to present video data of the customer support
6 representative to a user;
7 a microphone configured to capture audio data of the user; and
8 a video camera configured to capture video data of the user.
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